

CHAPTER U

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U.00 Introduction

This Chapter contains information concerning Telecommunications.

U.01 Telecommunications

Caltrans telecommunications functions are divided into two sections; engineering and operations.

The Office of Radio Communications (ORC), under the Division of Maintenance, monitors district telecommunication requirements, and provides system design, acquisition, installation, and maintenance of communication equipment. Improvements, changes and additions to the communications systems are accomplished in cooperation with the districts. More information about the products and services provided by the ORC can be found on the Caltrans Intranet by going to Caltrans ONRAMP, selecting "Internal Programs/Divisions/Districts", then selecting "Maintenance Radio Communications". Select "Telecommunications Manual".

The Headquarters Communications Center, under the Division of Traffic Operations, performs the following functions:

- (A) Monitors statewide radio and the California Highway Patrol Computer Aided Dispatch (Media CAD).
- (B) Operates the Caltrans Highway Information Network (CHIN).
- (C) Assist the Headquarters Emergency Operations Center during emergencies.

U.01.1 License Requirement

(A) Operator License

Caltrans personnel may be authorized to operate licensed land and mobile radio stations in the Highway Maintenance Radio System during the course of their duties without holding a license or permit issued by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Such authorization does not diminish in any respect, the responsibility of Caltrans to maintain control over the stations licensed to them, or for the proper function and operation of those stations in accordance with the terms of the license.

(B) Station License

No radio station shall be operated in the Highway Maintenance Radio System except in accordance with a valid authorization for that station as issued by the FCC. It is the responsibility of the ORC to furnish any required station authorizations to the districts for proper posting in accordance with Part 89.167 of the FCC rules and Regulations.

U.01.2 Radio Station Inspections

All radio stations and records of radio stations in the Caltrans Radio Communications System shall be made available for inspection at any time while the station is in operation, or shall be made available for inspection upon reasonable request of an authorized representative of the FCC.

U.01.3 Telecommunications Equipment Inventory

Each District Radio Coordinator is responsible for the district's telecommunications inventory. These responsibilities include; notifying Headquarters of all equipment status changes, taking annual physical equipment inventory, and ordering replacement components. The Telecommunications Property Manager in the ORC is available to assist with district inventories.

The ORC will assist the district coordinator in purchasing, storing, shipping, and receiving all district communication equipment, spare parts, and components. All district communication equipment not in service should be stored at the ORC warehouse, or at a location deemed appropriate by the Radio Coordinator. Stored equipment will fall into several categories including; district storage, pending stock awaiting shipment to the ORC, district assignment, or spare parts.

Status changes on equipment will be sent to the Property Manager at the ORC for updating of the computerized master telecommunications inventory. The District Radio Coordinator will receive various updated computer printouts showing current inventory status.

During the third quarter of each fiscal year, the districts shall submit a list of telecommunications equipment required for the next fiscal year.

U.01.4 Caltrans Auxiliary Radio System (CARS)

The Division of Maintenance is responsible for the management and coordination of the Caltrans Auxiliary Radio System. This consists of both equipment and a list of Caltrans employees who are volunteer amateur radio operators. These operators provide Caltrans with emergency communications in the event the normal communication methods become overburdened or non-existent.

The Caltrans Auxiliary Radio System (CARS) is affiliated with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), and the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) which has lead responsibility for government agencies. The RACES Coordinator, appointed by the Division of Maintenance, will be the contact person for OES.

U.01.5 Caltrans Highway Information Network (CHIN)

(A) Headquarters Communications Center

- (1) The Headquarters Communications Center receives statewide highway condition information from the districts via telephone, fax, email, Lane Closure System (LCS) and the CHP Management Information System computerized message reports. This updated highway condition information; made available 24-hours a day, seven days a week, includes restrictions, closures, re-openings, spills, extraordinary accidents, and unusual occurrences, and is available to the public via the Internet and telephone. CHIN provides continually updated information on the statewide highway system to assist the traveling public in making informed travel decisions.

(B) Policy

- (1) The Caltrans Division of Traffic Operations shall have a communications center responsible for collecting and disseminating statewide highway condition information.
- (2) Each district shall have a communications center responsible for collecting and disseminating district-wide highway condition information.
- (3) District Traffic Management Centers, as applicable, and their respective District Public Information Offices shall work closely together to ensure current highway condition information is promptly provided to the Headquarters Communications Center.
- (4) The Director's Office, the District Public Information Office, the Federal Highway Administration, and various other agencies shall be promptly informed by the Headquarters Communications Center when there are extraordinary accidents or unusual occurrences such as natural disasters, bomb threats, or mass demonstrations.
- (5) Accurate and timely information must be made available to the news media through close coordination of Headquarters and the District Public Information Offices. The Public Information Office shall provide information to the news media.
- (6) In cases of an extraordinary number of public inquiries on a particular highway condition, and when this condition is expected to continue for an extended period of time, Headquarters Communications Center shall ask District Public Information Offices to provide a referral telephone number. This number shall be included on the appropriate CHIN recording(s) until the condition changes and/or there is no longer a need for the number.
- (7) The Headquarters Communications Center shall notify affected districts when conflicting highway condition or emergency information is received from districts. The District Public Information Offices and District Traffic Management Centers shall complete a consistent report as soon as possible to ensure information provided to the public and/or media is accurate.
- (8) The Headquarters Communications Center shall inform Caltrans managers, Headquarters Public Information Office, outside agencies, and the public of emergency and highway condition information according to agreed upon procedures.

- (9) District Traffic Management Centers, as applicable, and their respective District Public Information Offices, shall promptly inform the Headquarters Communications Center of all reportable incidents as outlined in the Department of Transportation Highway Condition Reporting Guidelines.

Appendix U1

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION **HIGHWAY CONDITION REPORTING GUIDELINES**

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Division of Traffic Operations operates the Headquarters Communications Center 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Headquarters Communications Center functions as a central focal point for current highway condition information and distributes status reports to the public via the Caltrans Highway Information Network (CHIN) and the Internet.

The Headquarters Communications Center also maintains and utilizes critical Caltrans contact lists, e.g., Weekly Duty Officer List, and Earthquake Notification Report, and is responsible for notifying management of the ever-changing condition of the Highway System and reporting incidents involving departmental resources. The Headquarters Communications Center has direct communication links with all twelve districts within Caltrans.

In order to achieve the strategic goals and mission of the Department, the following procedures and responsibilities are being reissued.

HEADQUARTERS COMMUNICATIONS CENTER RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary function of the Headquarters Communications Center is to promptly disseminate accurate information to the motoring public via the CHIN and Internet system. Each district within the Department operates a District Maintenance Communications Center (DMCC) or District/Regional Traffic Management Center (TMC). These centers are the primary source of current statewide highway condition information. Therefore, it is imperative the Headquarters Communications Center receive accurate and timely information and updates from the districts.

In addition, the Headquarters Communications Center informs the Secretary and Undersecretary of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, the Directorate of the Department of Transportation, and designated staff of the current highway conditions.

DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES

District Directors will ensure the appropriate information, as described below, is reported to the Headquarters Communications Center by their DMCC/TMC accurately and timely.

District Maintenance and Construction personnel are to promptly report incidents directly to their DMCC/TMC prior to making any report of traffic conditions, incident and/or emergency to any other State agency or private business, e.g., traffic reporting companies, radio or television broadcasters, ski areas, or newspapers. Notification of fire, law or medical responders may preempt this priority. The DMCC/TMC can provide assistance in emergency notification and should be utilized.

The DMCC/TMC will immediately notify the Headquarters Communications Center via telephone of all reportable incidents prior to notification of any other State agency, private business, or media.

REPORTABLE INCIDENTS

The Headquarters Communications Center will be immediately notified by telephone if any of the following events occur on interstate highways, U.S. highways, or State routes.

1. Closure and reopening of highways, connector ramps, or transition roads. A closure is when all lanes are closed, each direction, on divided highways regardless if there is a detour.
2. Non-recurring incidents that impede the normal flow of traffic and projected to last for more than thirty (30) minutes.
3. Chain control limits and/or conditions when established or when there is a change in chain control limits and/or conditions (R1 to R2).
4. Spills of any reportable hazardous or unidentified material.
5. Any damage to a bridge, over-crossing, under-crossing, or tunnel caused by any vehicle, floating object, airplane, storm, or other natural cause.
6. Unusual or extraordinary occurrences. Examples of unusual or extraordinary occurrence follows, but are not limited to the examples given.
 - a) Any incident resulting in one or more fatality.
 - b) Any commercial vehicle accident (bus, train, truck, or airplane) on or adjacent to a highway maintained by the Department.

- c) Any chain reaction accident caused by, but not limited to dust, smoke, snow, fog, and blowing or drifting sand.
- d) Any vehicle accident that occurs within a highway construction project or Maintenance work zone, which involve a fatality or an ambulance-transported victim.
- e) Any incident which involves damage to any vehicle, equipment, or facility of the Department.
- f) Any incident which results in death or injury to an employee of the Department or contractor working for the Department.
- g) Natural or man-made disasters or emergencies which result in highway restriction or damage. Natural disasters would include, but are not limited to, earthquake, flood, tornado, tidal wave, volcanic eruption, forest fire, avalanche, and any type of slide. Man-made disasters would include, but are not limited to, arson, bomb threat, sniper attacks, or mass demonstration.
- h) Any situation on or near a highway which necessitates the evacuation of the immediate area.
- i) Significantly impaired visibility caused by fog, dust, smoke, blowing or drifting sand or other conditions.
- j) Any incident that affects a highway or facilities that may generate media coverage.
- k) Response to an American Missing Broadcast Emergency Response (AMBER) alert request from the California Highway Patrol.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The DMCC/TMC will promptly forward reportable incident information to the Headquarters Communications Center upon receiving incident information from region Maintenance crews, Maintenance stations, region offices, Construction, Traffic Operations, or other official source.

The following incident information will be included in the initial report and any subsequent update:

1. Name and unit of the person from the reporting location.
2. District, county, route and post mile. If the route affected is a transition or connector ramp, it would be reported as, for example, "The connector ramp from southbound Interstate 5 to eastbound State Route 91". Interstate 5 would be considered the affected route.
3. Geographic location of restriction. The geographic location must be one easily found on a map or that is signed at the location. Do not use local names, such as "Joe's Corner", "the upper four lane", or "mouth of the canyon", etc.
4. Type of restriction, such as closures, one-way, etc.
5. Date and time the restriction occurred, not the time the reporting agency was notified. The actual occurrence time is required.
6. The reason for the restriction.
7. Advise if there is a detour available.

NOTE: Detours must be posted or otherwise clearly stated to the public. If there is not a specific detour in place, advise Headquarters Communications Center and the message to motorists will be "Motorists are advised to use an alternate route."

8. The estimated time of partial reopening and/or full reopening (include the estimated delay to public).
9. Add all pertinent information received to the report.

NOTE: When the effects of the incident being reported crosses district boundaries, the reporting district is responsible for notifying the adjacent district(s). The districts will coordinate with each other and the Headquarters Communications Center.

The DMCC/TMC will promptly forward hourly updates on reportable incidents to the Communications Center.

OCCURRENCES OUTSIDE NORMAL WORK HOURS

Some DMCC/TMC are not staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During periods when major storms and/or unusual circumstances occur, the DMCC/TMC should be staffed to provide timely and accurate information to the Headquarters Communications Center.